

REMARKS

Applicant notes with appreciation the Examiner's indication that dependent claim 16 sets forth allowable subject matter. Applicant has amended independent claim 1, the sole independent claim in the application, without prejudice, to include the recitations previously presented in dependent claim 16. Consistent therewith, dependent claim 16 has been canceled. Applicant respectfully submits that independent claim 1, as amended, patentably distinguishes over all art of record for at least the reasons noted in the Examiner's "statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter."

Applicant has also amended the application to include new dependent claims 19-21. Support for the newly added claims is found in the specification, as filed (see, e.g., page 10, lines 10-12; page 24, lines 13-20; and page 26, line 21 to page 27, line 5). Applicant respectfully submits that the subject matter of new dependent claims 19-21 encompasses additional subject matter for which patent protection is warranted. Prompt entry of new claims 19-21 is respectfully requested.

With particular reference to applicant's dependent claims, applicant respectfully submits that all pending dependent claims, i.e., claims 2-15 and 17-18, patentably distinguish over all art of record for at least the reasons that independent claim 1 distinguishes over such art of record.

Applicant notes that, in the outstanding Office Action, independent claim 1 (prior to the amendment presented herein) and dependent claims 2-15 and 17-18, stand rejected based on one or more prior art references. Applicant respectfully disagrees with the outstanding art-based rejections and reserves the right to pursue such subject matter, in whole or in part, through continuation application(s) or otherwise. The amendment of independent claim 1 to include the subject matter of dependent claim 16 is made herein without prejudice, and has been effected to expedite prosecution of the present application and to gain prompt allowance thereof.

Applicant respectfully submits that all claims are now in condition for allowance. Prompt action leading to an early Notice to this effect is earnestly solicited. If the examiner believes that prosecution of this application may be advanced through a telephone discussion with applicant's counsel, he is invited to contact applicant's attorney at the number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 
Basam E. Nabulsi, Reg. No. 31,645
McCarter & English, LLP
City Place I
185 Asylum Street
Hartford, CT 06103-3495
Tele: (203) 324-1800
Fax: (203) 323-6513

HARTFORD: 637708.01